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SUBJECT: DEPUTY JUSTICE MINISTER DISCUSSES
COMBATTING CORRUPTIONAL WITH TRANSPARENCY
INTERNATIONAL CO-FOUNDER MICHAEL HERSHMAN

REF: KINSHASA 850

¶1. (SBU) Michael Hershman, American co-founder of Transparency International, visited Kinshasa September 14-16. This cable is a summary of Hershman's meeting with Justice Vice-Minister Collins Musonda Lalusambo. Hershman's meeting with President Joseph Kabila is at reftel. His meeting General Celestin Mbala Musense, the President's senior military advisor, will follow septel.

¶2. (SBU) Hershman met with Musonda on September 15. Musonda began by noting that the Ministry of Justice was engaged in the fight against corruption, but added that it was a difficult effort absent reform of the judiciary sector. The biggest challenges, according to Musonda, are that the DRC does not have enough magistrates, and magistrates are not properly trained. Magistrates, in Musonda's view, should be trained by foreigners.

¶3. (SBU) Responding to Hershman's question about how the MoJ would pursue a corruption case against a high-level official, Musonda said that there was a special investigatory unit within the MoJ that would take on such a case. Musonda, however, dodged a question whether the MoJ would enjoy political support to pursue high-level corruption cases.

¶4. (SBU) Musonda acknowledged that, although DRC laws are sufficient to fight corruption, enforcement "depends on human beings." Hershman acknowledged this, but underscored this was why it was important to have strong political will to pursue corrupt officials. Hershman said that in many countries, including in the DRC, it was vital to have a commitment from government, business, and civil society in order to change a "culture of corruption."

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